

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
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AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION NATO
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 0897

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SP

SUBJECT: ALIANZA POPULAR FIGURE ON CURRENT POLITICAL TOPICS

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF FEBRUARY 1, ERST WHILE
(SEE BELOW) ANEPA LEADER SALVADOR SERRATS, WHO ALSO HOLDS
A POSITION IN THE ALIANZA POPULAR (AP) HIERARCHY, MOST
BROADLY WAS CONCERNED WITH EFFORTS TO HAMPER THE AP'S
ELECTORAL EFFORT, CITING FOR EXAMPLE THE PERSISTENT
LABELING OF THE AP AS RIGHTIST. AP IS PART OF THE CENTER,
HE MAINTAINED, AND DIFFERED PROGRAMATICALLY VERY SLIGHTLY
IF AT ALL FROM THE PARTIDO POPULAR (AP LEADER FRAGA WAS
QUOTED THE SAME DAY IN THE PRESS AS DECLARING THAT THE
PP WAS NOT TO HIS LEFT.)

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2. SERRATS COMPLAINED OF THE VIRTUALLY SYSTEMATIC EFFORT
OF THE SPANISH MEDIA TO IGNORE THE ACTIONS AND STATEMENTS OF
AP LEADERS, WHILE POLITICANS OF OTHER STRIPES RECEIVED LAVISH
ATTENTION. THE PROBLEM, SAID SERRATS, HAD EXISTED EVEN
ON (STATE-OWNED) TELEVISION, UNTIL THE AP COMPLAINED TO
SUAREZ, FOLLOWING WHICH THE SITUATION IMPROVED.

3. ON ELECTORAL LAW NEGOTIATIONS, SERRATS SHOWED LITTLE CONCERN, ADDING TO THE IMPRESSION THAT THE ELECTORAL LAW (MADRID 618) IS ALL BUT COOKED. THE AP WANTED A MINIMUM OF THREE LOWER-HOUSE REPRESENTATIVES PER PROVINCE, THE OPPOSITION WAS PLUMPING FOR ONE, AND ON THRESHOLD PERCENTAGES FOR REPRESENTATION THE FIGURES WERE EIGHT AND TWO RESPECTIVELY. HE TOOK FOR GRANTED THE FINAL LAW WOULD HAVE FIGURES SOMEWHERE IN BETWEEN, AND MADE CLEAR HIS BELIEF THAT SUAREZ WILL EMERGE WITH THE ELECTORAL LAW HE WANTS.

4. SERRATS EXPRESSED THE SAME PERPLEXITY AS EVERYONE ELSE REGARDING WHO MIGHT BE BEHIND THE RECENT TERRORIST ACTS. HE FELT THE GOVT SHOULD EXERT "AUTHORITY" (SOMETHING OF A WATCHWORD IN AP CIRCLES), BUT ACKNOWLEDGED THE GOVT FACED A DILEMMA IN SEEKING TO ACT AGAINST THE TERRORIST WITHOUT IN EFFECT REALIZING THE TERRORIST GOAL OF BLOCKING DEMOCRACY. HE NEVERTHELESS SAID TWICE THAT THE GOVT WAS BENT ON PRESENTING A LIBERAL IMAGE ABROAD, A CONCERN HE CLEARLY CONSIDERED EXCESSIVE. HE EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE INCIDENTS AT THE BURIAL SERVICES OF THE MURDERED POLICEMEN (MADRID 743.) WE NOTE THERE WERE NO SERIOUS INCIDENTS AT EHT SUBSEQUENT, GOVT-SPONSORED MEMORIAL MASS.

5. ON ANEPA'S DIFFICULTIES, REMINISCENT OF SIMILAR PROBLEMS ON THE LEFT, SERRATS EXPLAINED THAT A GROUP (WHICH HE CALLED A MINORITY) UNHAPPY WITH ANEPA PRESIDENT THOMAS DE CARRANZA'S STYLE OF LEADERSHIP HAD SOUGHT TO ASSUME LEADERSHIP ITSELF, USING "VERBAL TERRORISM." IN THE FACE OF CERTAIN PRATY BREAK-UP AND IN VIEW
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OF THE RISK THAT A DISRUPTIVE MINORITY WOULD ASSUME ANEPA'S SEATS IN THE AP LEADERSHIP (AND, NOT INCIDENTALLY, TITLE TO THE ANEPA TREASURY), SERRATS AND OTHERS HAD DECIDED TO CONSIDER ANEPA DEAD. THEY WERE TREADING WATER WITHIN THE AP, WAITING TO SEE HOW UNIFICATION EFFORTS IN WHICH THEY HOPED TO JOIN FARED AMONG OTHER AP COMPONENTS. (SUBSEQUENT TO THIS CONVERSATION, THE ANTI-CARRANZA DISSIDENTS ANNOUNCED THE ADOPTION OF THE NAME "ANEPA CENTRO POPULAR" AND SAID THEY WOULD SEEK TIES WITH LIKE-MINDED GROUPS, PRESUMABLY THE PARTIDO POPULAR-LED CENTRO DEMOCRATICO). STABLER

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